

Change in adult catechism accepted

Jerry Filteau | Aug. 28, 2009 NCR Today

U.S. Catholic catechism changes language on covenant with Jews

The Vatican has approved the U.S. bishops' 2008 decision to change a sentence in the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults that called God's covenant with the Jewish people "eternally valid for them."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops announced Aug. 27 that approval of the change had come from the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy, which oversees catechetical activity in the church.

The announcement called the change a "clarification" and "not a change in the church's teaching."

The U.S. bishops adopted the adult catechism ? the first such national catechism in the U.S. since the Baltimore Catechism, which dates back to the 19th century.

Since its first publication in 2006 some 240,000 copies of the U.S. adult catechism have been distributed, said Vernon Love, marketing specialist for USCCB Publications. He said a printing of 30,000 copies of the slightly revised version was due to arrive in September.

In the section that explains Catholic relations with the Jews, the original sentence said, "Thus the covenant that God made with the Jewish people through Moses remains eternally valid for them."

The revised version says, "To the Jewish people, whom God first chose to hear his word, 'belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ.'" It cites Romans 9:4-5 and No. 839 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as references.

The USCCB press release on the change said, "The clarification reflects the teaching of the church that all previous covenants that God made with the Jewish people are fulfilled in Jesus Christ through the new covenant established through his sacrificial death on the cross. Catholics believe that the Jewish people continue to live within the truth of the covenant God made with Abraham, and that God continues to be faithful to them."

The clarification in the U.S. catechism is related to another clarification on Catholic-Jewish relations this summer by two USCCB committees. That clarification raised concerns about the future of Catholic-Jewish dialogue among leading U.S. Jewish organizations. See: [Jewish groups question future of dialogue with Catholics](#) [1]

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